

Annex "A," Subparagraph li,
Sociological Background

INTELLECTUAL AND ARTISTIC
EXPRESSION

53 Intellectual and artistic expression is interpreted in this chapter to mean the communication of ideas and ideals through creative and academic writing, painting, the plastic arts, dancing, and music.

The Chinese written language is the vehicle for official business and creative expression in all parts of China. Therefore the bulk of the creative and academic writing of the North China Region does not differ from that produced in China as a whole. Because Peking has been the national capital of China (except from 1927-49), North China is usually considered representative of China in cultural aspects. The new literary movement was also originated in Peking. This identification of the bulk of the creative and academic writings of the North China Region with that of the Chinese nation is particularly true today when the nation is ruled by an authoritarian and centralized government and when all cultural innovations emanate from Peking.

The Chinese, especially the Chinese Communists, often speak of literature and the arts as one. In the Communists' policy statements, what pertains to literature also pertains

- 53 to the arts. Therefore, as far as the theory and policy of the arts are concerned, no separate treatment is necessary.

No attempt is made in this chapter to describe the propaganda and information machine of the Chinese Communists in which literature and art are made to play their part. For this, consult the chapters on propaganda and information in this handbook.

I. GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF LITERARY ACTIVITIES IN COMMUNIST CHINA

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The reform of literature and art (wen-i cheng-feng) at Yen-an in 1942¹ made the practice of literature and art in the Liberated Areas overt political activities; the application of the same line to the entire country in 1949 subjugated all writers and artists in the nation to the service

1. Mao Tse-tung's speeches at the Party School in Yen-an in February and at the Yen-an Literary and Art Circles' meeting in May 1942 established the "line" of literature and art which had been endorsed by the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party and which has since been upheld as the creed of writers and artists in Communist China. The general tenor of the speeches was that literary and art workers at Yen-an, being undeniably "revolutionaries by choice," should stop the hitherto blind imitation of alien and imported

- 53 of the state. Control and regimentation of
668 thought in literature and art became more systematic as the Communists consolidated their power, the victor being the arbiter of artistic "truth." In general, the control over writers, artists, and their work takes three forms, as was true in the Liberated Areas after the 1942 reform: (1) the organization of writers and artists under government auspices; (2) the identification of the duties of the writers and artists with the implementation of government policy; and (3) the unceasing use of literary and

prototypes and the singing of abstract, contentless tunes which had nothing to do with the revolution and which could not possibly be understood by the peasant-worker-soldier masses. In their place, fresh and lively revolutionary themes in the Chinese style would be appreciated by the masses. Although in principle Mao believed that Chinese literature and art should benefit from masterpieces of other cultures, especially those produced in the Soviet Union, in no instance would he allow the separation of Chinese literature and art from immediate revolutionary tasks; and on this basis, he puts the popularization of literature and art ahead of sophistication. See Mao Tse-tung, Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung, Peking, Jen-min ch'u-pan-she, 1953, Vol. 3, pp. 833-900.

53 art criticism to keep writers and artists in line.
668 Now, however, the scope is national.

53A. The All-China Federation of Literary and Art Circles

In July 1949, before the establishment of the Central People's Government, writers and artists from various parts of China were "invited" to Peking where the All-China Federation of Literary and Art Circles was organized to co-ordinate the activities of a number of the nationwide organizations in specific cultural fields, such as literature, art, music, and the cinema; it was to follow the line laid down by Mao Tse-tung in 1942. Theoretically, the federation is not a government body, but it sent delegates to the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference in September 1949, as did Communist-sponsored political factions and mass organizations. The chairman and vice-chairman of the federation were given posts in the Communist government.

At the organizational meeting in July, Chou En-lai told the gathered writers and artists that they were the representatives of 70,000 literary and art workers in China, of which 30,000 were in the People's Liberation Army, another 30,000 scattered in the old Liberated Areas, and the remaining 10,000 were in areas recently liberated from the Kuomintang. From Chou's statement it is obvious that he identified as writers and artists Party propaganda personnel and those workers